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THE GREAT DEVIL;

OR, THE ROBBER OF GENOA:

A MELO-DRAMA IN TWO ACTS,

BY CHARLES DIBDIN, Esq.

Author of *The Smuggler's Daughter*, *The Terrible Peak*,
Johnny Armstrong, &c.

PRINTED FROM THE ACTING COPY,

With Remarks, by D.—G.

A Description of the Costume, cast of the Characters,
Entrances and Exits, Relative Positions of the Per-
formers, and the whole of the Stage Busines, as now
performed in the METROPOLITAN MINOR THEATRES.

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FINE ENGRAVING,

from

A Drawing taken in the Theatre

by

MR. R. CRUIKSHANK.

Shakspeare

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The Great Devil.

Nichola has cut open the top of the Great Devil's cap, and taken out the keys.

Act II. Scene 8.

THE GREAT DEVIL;

OR, THE

ROBBER OF GENOA.

A MELO-DRAMA,

In Two Acts,

BY CHARLES DIBDIN,

Author of The Wild Man, The Terrible of Peak, Johnnie Armstrong, Smuggler's Daughter, &c.

PRINTED FROM THE ACTING COPY, WITH REMARKS,
BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL, BY D.—G.

To which are added,

A DESCRIPTION OF THE COSTUME,—CAST OF THE CHARACTERS,—
ENTRANCES AND EXITS,—RELATIVE POSITIONS OF THE
PERFORMERS ON THE STAGE, AND THE WHOLE
OF THE STAGE BUSINESS,

As performed at the

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REMARKS.

The Great Devil.

LITTLE dreamt we, seven and thirty years ago, when first we beheld this popular melodrama, that one day we should professionally anatomize it. We remember, with the freshness of yesterday, the sensations it produced: every faculty was absorbed in sight and hearing; terror, wonder, and amazement rapidly succeeded; and, though high and glorious illusions have since enchain'd us, nothing, perhaps, ever gave us greater delight at the time, or fixed more permanently on the memory. Experience had not then suggested the Why and the Wherefore; we had not been taught the folly of being pleased with unrealities. It never occurred to us that the Great Devil was a middle-sized, harmless gentleman, who quaffed his home-brewed elixir of malt and hops at the Sir Hugh Middleton; that bandy-legged Bridget was an Israelite of the masculine gender; that castles, caverns, and ghosts were pasteboard, paint, and moonshine; and that the fierce fighting was all in fun!—We had not been admitted behind the scenes. Time has despoiled the magician of his wand and conjuring cap; we now banquet on facts, and prefer the dry, prickly husks of disagreeable truths to the whipt-syllabubs of pleasant fiction.

Yet we greet our grim friend with a hearty shake—not after the calf's-foot-jelly fashion of our boyhood!—happy to renew old acquaintanceship. No change is discernable in *him*. *He* is the same dare-devil as in days of yore; we have subsided into cold critics; our Romance, like an ancient volcano, is burnt out. Could he recall the inquisitive, shining face that once gazed at his portentous black muzzle and bushy beard, what lines of careful thought would he now see imprinted there! That joyous laugh is become a querulous chuckle, in the spirit of Democritus! Yet this shall not mar our merry meeting. Odds brimstone and blue flame! we will make holiday in Pandemonium!

Nichola serves two masters—the Great Devil and the Baron Rodolph; but of this joint servitude neither master is aware. His mornings are devoted to the Baron, when, dressed in scarlet livery, he receives the orders of the day; his nights are the property of the Devil, when, muffled in a disguise, and armed to the teeth, he stops travellers, and pistols them for their pistoles! Nichola is not a rogue by nature: his object in doing the Devil's bidding is to betray

him into the hands of justice ; yet, in point of honesty, there is not a pin to choose between his two masters. Baron Rodolph, in order to possess himself of the estates of Count Ludovico, has poignarded that unhappy gentleman ; and he learns, to his great joy, that the wife and family of his victim have just arrived at his castle. He commands Nichola to bury the Count, and murder his two children ; enforcing his command with a hint, that if he does not instantly set about it, somebody will soon have to bury *him* ! While Nichola is bending over the corse, he beholds it move. He applies a restorative ; binds up the wound ; the supposed dead man recovers sense and motion ; Nichola draws aside a secret pannel leading to an inner chamber, and the Count enters it.

In her journey to the castle, the Countess had fallen in with the Great Devil. Nichola, as first lieutenant, had been charged with the custody of her ladyship and children, who were to be led, blindfolded, to the robbers' cave. By clashing a couple of swords, and firing a pistol, as if in mortal combat, he had got credit, as the Baron's factotum, of having rescued them from captivity. This well-intentioned service unfortunately realises the old proverb of "Out of the frying-pan into the fire."

The Great Devil is highly incensed when he hears that the Countess is no longer his prisoner. He draws his sword on Nichola, whom he accuses of treachery, and receives a defiance in return. The combattants are soon parted ; and Nichola, to cast away all suspicion of playing false, proposes, amidst the huzzas of the troop, to attack the Baron's castle that night. The attack is made, and after some hard fighting on both sides, Nichola (disguised in the Baron's livery) is conquered and taken prisoner.

The two children had been entrusted by her dutiful son to Dame Bridget, the dram-drinking, bandy-legged old lady, to whom Nichola owes his introduction into this troublesome world ; with strict injunctions to conceal them in her cottage. Thither Nichola is conducted by the Great Devil ; at whose departure, that excellent parent supplies him with his predatory disguise. He repairs to the castle, enters by the secret pannel, and while the Baron is making uncemonious love to the Countess, he fires off a pistol, shows up the Count in the attitude of a ghost, and, in the confusion of so unexpected a visitation, bears off the lady.

The robbers have just set fire to Bridget's cottage, as Nichola rushes in with the Countess. She is seized, and

carried to the cave, where the Great Devil makes love to her; politely promising not to murder her husband if she will comply, and he will turn thief. Nichola having abstracted the bullets from his commander's pistols to prevent them from doing mischief, is discovered; and death is denounced against him by the gang. He has, however, taken the precaution of pouring a bottle of opium into their liquor, which not only sends them comfortably to sleep, but enables mother and son to practise various devices—such as taking a door off its hinges; cutting the Great Devil's keys out of the crown of his cap, and releasing himself and fellow-prisoner. But the Count having accidentally let go the wheel that raises the huge stone from over a cavity by which the den is entered, the loud noise rouses the Great Devil from his slumbers; the robbers rush in; and Nichola and the Count and Countess are sentenced to be thrown into the sea. To carry this into execution, a robber turns the wheel; when the Baron, who has been watching their movements, enters with a party of soldiers. The Baron and the Great Devil pistol each other; and Nichola, casting off his disguise, discovers to both masters how capitally he has bamboozled them! In their last agonies, they make an effort to poignard the cruel wag, but die in the attempt.

The Great Devil is understood to have been a real character, who, with thirty robbers as ferocious as himself, out-did all former desperadoes, from Sawney Bean to Three-Fingered Jack. This melodrama was a great favourite in the merry old days of Sadlers' Wells. Jew Davis, a popular low-comedy actor, was the original bandy-legged Bridget, and sang an odd song descriptive of that ungraceful curvature to which Bridget owed her *sobriquet*. He highly delighted us; but, alas! we were too young to be critical.—Nichola was played by Grimaldi. Immortal Joe! Death has silenced that extraordinary humorist! But for the Drury Lane Theatrical Fund, his once brilliant sun might have set in sorrow. It raised his drooping spirit, borne down by domestic calamity; sustained his sinking frame, prostrated by premature decrepitude; and sheltered him in honourable retirement. Away with the gloom of fanaticism and the cant of hypocrisy, obscuring the bright face of wit and genius! *This is true philanthropy!*

He died at Pentonville on the 31st of May, 1837, (having been found dead in his bed, after eating a hearty supper) and was buried on Monday, June 6, in the burying ground of St. James's Chapel, Pentonville Hill. In the

next grave lie the bones of his friend, Charles Dibdin.—Few have passed through life more beloved than Joe Grimaldi. He was a kind, single-hearted, and honest man.

“ Life is a game we are bound to play—
The wise enjoy it, fools grow sick of it;
Losers, we find, have the stakes to pay,
That winners may laugh, for that’s the trick of it! ”*



D.—G.

* Joe Grimaldi.

Cast of the Characters,
As performed at Sadlers Wells Theatre.

<i>Count Ludivico</i>	Mr. Campbell.
<i>Baron Rodolph</i>	Mr. Ryall.
<i>Lenardo (a Military Officer)</i>	Mr. Smith.
<i>The Great Devil (the Robber of Genoa)</i>	Mr. Hartland.
<i>Nichola (his First Lieutenant, and Servant to Baron Rodolph)</i>	Mr. Grimaldi.
<i>Countess Ludivico</i>	Miss Browne.
<i>Dame Bridget (the Mother of Nichola)</i> .	Mr. Sloman.
<i>Robbers, Cottagers, Servants, Children, and Soldiers.</i>	

Costume.

COUNT LUDIVICO.—Black surtout—cap—pantaloons and boots.

BARON RODOLPH.—Grey surtout—white waistcoat—pantaloons—hessian boots.

LENARDO.—Officer’s uniform.

THE GREAT DEVIL.—Green velvet jacket and breeches, with gold braiding—full shirt—red sash—canvass stockings—high Spanish hat, with feathers and ribbons—loose silk neckerchief—pistols, stiletto, and sword.

NICHOLA.—*First dress:* Handsome livery. *Second dress:* Claret coloured jacket and breeches—the rest of the dress similar to the Great Devil’s, but inferior.

ROBBERS.—Ibid, with different coloured breeches.

COUNTESS LUDIVICO.—Black velvet dress—Neapolitan cap.

DAME BRIDGET.—Blue jacket—brown cloth petticoat—check apron—low crown hat—red stockings—shoes.

THE GREAT DEVIL;

OR.

THE ROBBER OF GENOA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Inside of Dame Bridget's cottage—a door, c. r. — a table, c., with a robber's dress laying upon it.*

DAME BRIDGET *discovered seated, l. c., with a spinning-wheel before her.*

Bri. [Rising, opening the door, and looking out.] He stays a long time! [Coming forward.] That's one of my son Nichola's dresses. He's first lieutenant to the Great Devil, a notorious robber, and principal valet-de-chambre to the Baron Rodolph. He carries on both professions at the same time without the knowledge of his masters. I fain would have him throw up his commission, and betray the robber into the hands of justice. Aye! and he says he will when a fit opportunity arrives. Well, well! all's well that ends well, say I.

Nichola. [Calling without.] Hollo! hollo!

Bri. Ah, here he comes at last.

Enter NICHOLA at the door, c. F.

Nic. Well, mother, I have stayed beyond my time, but never mind. Come, quick! help me on with my disguise. I now go to execute a commission for my master, the Great Devil, and, after that, to perform one for my other master.

Bri. Commission! Aye, aye, you'll be commissioned one day or other!

Nic. Never fear, mother, I know how to play my cards.

Bri. Yes, but you may lose the odd trick, for all that.

Nic. May! To be sure I may, but I'll take care they don't discover my plans.

Bri. If the Baron finds you out, you'll be hanged ; if the Great Devil finds you out, you'll be shot, and then there will be an end of you. [Weeping.] Oh, dear ! oh, dear ! I shall cry myself to death !

Nic. And then there'll be an end of you. [Going.] Good by, mother ! don't be out of spirits.

Bri. [Producing a bottle, and drinking.] I'm afraid I shall, for my bottle's nearly empty.

Nic. For shame, mother ! Had you any seed of reflection, you would know that nothing brings on old age and wrinkles so soon as dram-drinking.

Bri. [Drawing out another bottle.] Here !

Nic. What ! a bottle in each pocket, mother ! [Snatching it.] I'll e'en take this to prevent you doing yourself further mischief.

Bri. Ay, what ! who said dram-drinking brought on old age and wrinkles !

Nic. [Laughing.] Ha, ha, ha ! Good by, mother ! Take care of yourself—don't be out of spirits.

[Music.—Exit at the door, c. r.]

Bri. [Draining the bottle.] I'm afraid I shall, though. [Looking after him, and returning.] What a hard-hearted young rogue to leave his poor old mother without a drop of comfort !

SONG.—BRIDGET—[Introduced.]

SCENE II.—*A Country Inn—a sign over the door, “THE BUNCH OF GRAPES”—under it is written, “Bona Vina!”*

A drum and fife is heard without.—Enter LENARDO, r., followed by four Soldiers, armed.

Len. Here will we halt and recruit ourselves ; and then we will commence our search after this Great Devil. I shall receive two hundred pistoles for him dead or alive.

Enter DAME BRIDGET, l.

Bri. [Overhearing him.] Aye, aye, you'll be rewarded, no doubt.

Len. To be sure I shall ! Then there's that fellow, his tiger of a lieutenant, he is almost as bad as his master. But I shall catch him some day or other, and——

Bri. What—what will you do with him ?

Len. Do with him ! Get him hanged !

Bri. Hanged ! Oh, dear ! what will become of my poor Nichola ?

Len. What say you ?

Bri. [Hesitating.] No—no—nothing—nothing, sir !

Len. You look like a suspicious character. I shouldn't wonder if you were one of his spies.

Bri. Me a suspicious character ! Oh, very well, if you suspect me, I'll leave the company. [Going, l.

Len. [Stopping her.] No, you won't ; I'll take you before your betters, so come back.

Bri. Bless you, sir, I'm no highwayman—I'm only poor, hobbling Bridget ; and as for Nichola, he—

Len. Nichola !

Bri. [Stammering.] Nic—Nic—ho—la ! Did I say Nichola ?

Len. Yes, to be sure you did. Who is he ?

Bri. Oh, he's principal valet-de-chambre to the Baron Rodolph, and my son, at your service.

Len. Aye, but I've only your slippery word for that, so come along ! I shall have you taken care of. Come !

Bri. Oh, bless us, Mr. Blunderbuss ! Oh, dear ! oh, dear !

[Exit Bridget into the inn—Lenardo motions the Soldiers to follow—they leave their arms at the door—exeunt all but one Soldier, who draws his sword and examines the blade.

Enter NICHOLA, cautiously, R. U. E.

Nic. [Counting the fire arms.] Four soldiers. Thrice that number of our gang are lurking near, so I cannot now betray the Great Devil into their hands, but must be in his interest at least for this time, and wait for a more favourable opportunity. [Rudely slapping the Soldier on the shoulder.] Well !

[The Soldier turns—Nichola holds a pistol to his head, and motions him off—the Soldier runs out, R.—Nichola whistles and motions on the Robbers, l.—they advance cautiously and place themselves near the inn, each taking one of the carbines—Nichola fires a pistol in the air—the Soldiers rush hastily from the inn, and, finding themselves disarmed, attempt to retreat.

Enter the GREAT DEVIL and other Robbers, l.—they meet and surround the Soldiers.

[Music.—Exeunt all but the Great Devil, R.

Enter the Countess Ludivico, with her two Children, followed by a Female Servant, carrying a portmanteau—the Great Devil takes off his hat, and bows to the Countess.

Cou. Pray, chevalier, can you direct me and my suite to the castle of the Baron Rodolph?

[*The Great Devil bows, and beckons on Nichola and two Robbers, who conduct the Servant away.*]

Re-enter BRIDGET from the inn—she makes signs to the Countess to remain—the Great Devil, observing her, fiercely motions her to desist, but finding that she persists, he throws her a purse of money—the Countess looks on with surprise and alarm.

Bri. Bless your honour's charity! her ladyship was only inquiring the way to the Baron Rodolph's castle, and I thought she might take the wrong road.

Dev. [*Apart to Bridget.*] Away, woman! stand aside! I know my own business. [To the Countess.] To the castle! Certainly, my lady—this way!

Bri. [*Aside.*] What a twang!

[*Exit the Great Devil, l. u. e., leading the Countess and the two Children.*]

Re-enter NICHOLA, cautiously, r. u. e.

Nic. Hasten home, good mother; I will contrive to be the ladies conductor through the pass to our cave, but, instead of taking her thither, I will lead her to our cottage, change my dress, and then see her to the castle in safety.

Bri. Will you, my boy? Thou art a brave fellow! Be quick—away!

[*Exit Nichola, hastily, l. u. e.—Bridget slowly takes the bottle from her pocket, drinks, and goes into the inn, as the scene closes.*]

SCENE III.—*A Front Wood.*

Enter Robbers and the GREAT DEVIL, leading the COUNTESS and the two Children.

Dev. Comrades, bind the captives! Where is our lieutenant?

Nic. Here!

[*Nichola officiously assists in bandaging the eyes of the Countess and Children—when they are secured, the Robbers go off, l.—the Great Devil follows them, motioning Nichola to be careful of the captives, as he is rudely dragging them off, r.*]

SCENE IV.—*Dame Bridget's Cottage, as before.*

DAME BRIDGET discovered seated.

Bri. Well, I have recruited my spirits. [Drinks.] I hope that Nichola may succeed.

Enter NICHOLA, rudely dragging in the COUNTESS and the two Children, c. d. f.

Nic. Get me a chair, mother.

[*Bridget brings a chair—Nichola forces the Countess to sit—he pulls off his disguise, takes two swords and a pistol, and then drags the Countess and Children off, c. d. f.*]

SCENE V.—*A Wood.*

Enter NICHOLA, l., dragging on the COUNTESS and Children—he lets go the cords, draws the two swords, and clashes them as if in combat then lays down one sword, fires a pistol, and runs hastily to the Countess—the captives are much alarmed—Nichola removes the bandages from their eyes—the Children, on their knees, express their gratitude to him, while he shakes his sword as if at some person retreating—he then assumes a pompous air, takes a child in each hand, and leads them off, r., followed by the Countess, who expresses her gratitude for the preservation of herself and Children.

SCENE VI.—*A Gothic Apartment in Baron Rodolph's Castle—a map hanging, c., on which is written, "MAP OF THE ESTATES OF COUNT LUDIVICO."*

BARON RODOLPH discovered leaning on a table, r., and COUNT LUDIVICO lying on the ground, l. c., with a wound in his side, and apparently dead.

Rod. An hour since, thou lived'st, and was lord of all this estate—mine by right, which thou gained by twining round the heart of a foolish old uncle, and by thy virtues robbed me of my rights. I have of late assumed a virtue which is foreign to my heart. Virtue, avaunt! I know thee not. In an evil hour I swore to be revenged; but I feel a rankling here, so keen, so horrid, I could almost turn this dastard weapon on my recreant self.

Enter NICHOLA, hastily, L.

How now? why am I thus interrupted?

Nic. Your lordship's cousins, the Countess Ludivico, and her children, have arrived.

Rod. [Rising.] The Countess!

[*He runs forward, and clasps his hands in transport*—*Nichola has a full view of the body—he points at the Baron, and, in a menacing manner, is about to leave him, when the Baron rushes after him, draws a dagger, and drags him forward—the Baron pauses in agony, and Nichola appears confused and dejected.*

Rod. [Apart to *Nichola*.] Consent to bury this body in some secret and lonely spot, [*Offering a purse.*] and this shall be your reward,—or this! [*Presenting a dagger in the other hand.*] Quick, or I strike!

[*Nichola drops on one knee, and covers his face with his hands—the Baron stands over him smiling maliciously—Nichola holds both his hands—the Baron gives the purse, and Nichola rises submissively and bows.*

Rod. [Apart to *Nichola*.] There are two children, who, by thy hand, must be removed. [*Nichola starts.*] They now are virtuous; they may become vicious. That were a pity. They have long been checks to my ambitious hopes—specks upon my sight, and must quickly be removed. Learn, Nichola, that I can reward the faithful vassal for his services. Gold, precious gold, shall be thine!

[*Exit, r.*

[*Nichola indignantly throws down the purse, retires to the table, seats himself, and leans despondingly over the body—Count Ludivico moves—Nichola, in rapture, rushes forward and raises his hands in supplication—he then secures the door, takes a bottle from his pocket, and applies it to the Count—places a hankerchief on his wound, and the Count, by degrees, revives, and expresses his gratitude.*

Nic. [Raising him on one knee, and then placing him in a chair.] Hush! My own life is in danger, if I should be discovered. Enter a private apartment known only to me. Remain there, and do not quit it, until I can prepare a place of safety for you.

Lud. I consent.

[Nichola pulls aside the tapestry, and discovers a secret pannel—exit the Count, c. f.

Nic. I must now attend my master, the Baron, to receive his orders, and then I will wait on my other master, the Great Devil, to give an account of my captives.

[Exit, l.

SCENE VII.—*A Gothic Hall—a sofa, r. c. f.*

Enter BARON RODOLPH, l., leading in the COUNTESS and Children.

Cou. My lord, I thought my husband would not have been the last to welcome me.

Rod. [Confused.] Your husband! He knew not of your coming, and he is gone this morning, heaven knows where.

[He stamps.

Enter a Servant, l.

Go find the Count Ludivico. [Exit Servant, l.] Now tell me, fair cousin, of this disaster, from which my valet so happily rescued you.

Cou. As I was journeying hither with my suit; I inquired of a noble chevalier the way to your castle. He offered to conduct me to it; but, to my sorrow, I found myself in the hands of a robber who was taking me to his retreat, when fortunately, your valet came to my assistance, and rescued me.

Rod. Ah, lady, 'twas a notorious robber called the Great Devil! You have had a lucky escape; you could not have fallen into worse hands. [Aside.] My own excepted.

Re-enter the Servant, l., followed by NICHOLA—the Baron takes the Children, and gives them to Nichola—the Countess embraces them, and Nichola leads them off, l.—the Servant beckons the Baron, and whispers him—the Baron starts.

Cou. My lord, you seem embarrassed and distressed.

Rod. [To the Servant.] Count Ludivico! Unhappy man!

Cou. Speak—quick! say, what of him?

Rod. He has, unfortunately, fallen from a gondola, and is drowned.

[The Countess faints—Rodolph supports her to the sofa, and stands over her as the scene closes.

SCENE VIII.—*A Cave, surrounded with shrubs.*

Enter Robbers, and the SECOND LIEUTENANT, l. f.

Second L. Once more we are all here in safety, except

our captain and first lieutenant. Do you not think, Gilliard, second commander played the devil with our last enterprize?

First R. Why, as to that, I know not, but if he don't prove too many for us, write me down an honest man.

[A whistle is heard without, which is answered by the Robbers.]

Enter the GREAT DEVIL—he counts the Robbers, and looks eagerly around.

Enter NICHOLA, hastily, L.

Dev. Where is the lady and her children?

Nic. The servants of the Baron attacked me in great numbers, and made me prisoner, but, as confinement does not agree with my constitution, I took the liberty of escaping from the castle with this good booty. *[Shows a purse.]*

Dev. *[Drawing his sword.]* Liar! I'll not believe thee! *[Nichola draws and defends himself.]*

A COMBAT.

[The Second Lieutenant interposes, and a reconciliation takes place.]

Nic. Noble chief, I propose this night to attack the Baron's castle.

Omnes. Huzza!

[They all draw their swords and advance one step, each laying his hand on his sword, then on his heart—then cross their swords, swear, and step back again—Nichola distributes the contents of the purse, and makes a sign to them to depart.—Exeunt the Robbers, followed by the Great Devil and Nichola.]

SCENE IX.—An Apartment in the Castle, with lattice work—gothic doors, opening into the garden.

Enter the COUNTESS, in black, weeping, followed by the BARON RODOLPH, C. D. F., who appears dejected.

Cou. *[Seating herself.]* Pray, my lord, let me see my children.

Enter a Servant, L.

Bar. Fellow, have you brought the Countess's children?

[Aside.] They are safe enough by this time!

Ser. My lord, they are no where to be found?

Cou. Ha! my children gone!

[*The Robbers are peeping in through the lattice work—a pistol is fired, the doors are burst open, and the Countess faints.*

Enter Robbers, hastily, c. d. f., headed by NICHOLA, who attacks the Baron, and they fight off, r.—Exeunt the Robbers, r. and l.

Enter the GREAT DEVIL—he is about to bear off the Countess, when Nichola rushes in, dressed in the Baron's livery, and attacks him.

Re-enter the Robbers, r. and l.—the Great Devil conquers Nichola—he is secured by the Robbers—he expresses grief and confusion—the Servants rush in, and are over-powered, and the scene closes on the Picture.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Garden of the Castle.*

Enter Robbers, r., as if in retreat, leading on the First Robber, wounded—others dragging on NICHOLA, followed by the GREAT DEVIL—they cross to l., and exeunt.

SCENE II.—*Dame Bridget's Cottage—a bed, r.*

BRIDGET and two Children discovered.

Bri. I'll turn down the bed, and then I'll tell you a pretty story to send you to sleep. [*She goes to the bed, returns, and sits down on a stool, c.—the Children get on each side of her, and she places her arms around their necks.*] Now I'll tell you such a pretty story. Once upon a time, there was a knight—aye, a knight-errant, and he would go a knight-erranting as most knight-errants do.—He travelled and he travelled, and the night was so dark—aye, so dark—as dark as pitch, when he came to the foot of an old castle: he saw a man cross the park, and—

Child. Pray, dame, how could he see a man cross the path, if the night was as dark as pitch?

Bri. Oh, you little, sly rogue! don't you know that impossibilities form the beauties of a romance, or a traveller's tale? Well, as I was saying, he saw a man cross the park, when he heard such—

Robbers. [Without.] Hillio ! hillio !

[*Bridget hides the Children behind the curtains.*

Enter SECOND LIEUTENANT and Robbers, D. F., with NICHOLA prisoner, and GILLIARD the First Robber, wounded, followed by the GREAT DEVIL.

Dev. Dame, I ask shelter for this prisoner, and your care of my wounded servant, till the break of day.

[*Exit, D. F.*

Lie. And see if you can't make yourself useful in dressing this poor fellow's arm.

Gil. Peace ! What a noise you make about this poor fellow's arm ! Let Gilliard complain for himself.

[*During their conversation, Bridget is acting dumb show with Nichola, who tells her to get him a disguise—Bridget brings a basket and undoes the bandage of Gilliard—she then gives a candle to the Lieutenant, and places a chair for him—as he is going to sit down, she draws away the chair—he falls and extinguishes the light—stage dark—Bridget unties the arms of Nichola, who goes behind the bed and changes his dress—Bridget gets a tinderbox, and begins to strike a light—she looks round to see if Nichola is ready to escape, and keeps blowing out the match—exit Nichola, D. F., in his robber's dress, just as Bridget lights the candle—the Lieutenant jumps up and looks around.*

Re-enter NICHOLA, D. F.

Nic. Where is your prisoner ?

Lie. He was here but now.

Gil. But now he's gone. [Laughing.] Ha, ha, ha !

[*The Lieutenant searches the cottage, and discovers the Children—he eyes Bridget with suspicion—Nichola interposes, and motions the Lieutenant and Gilliard, who exeunt, D. F.—Nichola makes a sign of joy and hope, embraces the Children, and exits, D. F.*

SCENE III.—A Gothic Apartment in the Castle—folding doors, C. F.

The Countess discovered in tears.

Enter BARON RODOLPH, C. D. F., with a pistol in his hand—he secures the door.

Rod. Why thus, fair cousin, are you ever in tears?—
You grieve too much for that you never can regain.

[*The Countess motions to know the reason of his locking the door—the Baron lays the pistol on the table, kneels, and expresses his love—the Countess receives his declaration with disdain.—The secret pannel opens—NICHOLA snatches up the pistol, retires through the pannel, and fires it off—the Baron draws his sword, and the Countess screams.*

Enter COUNT LUDIVICO from the secret pannel—he stands in the attitude of a ghost—the Countess faints—the Baron, horror struck, turns away his face—the Count exits at the pannel—the Baron turns, and hastily follows him—Nichola rushes in, and bears off the Countess, R.

SCENE IV.—*The Outside of Bridget's Cottage—a violent storm.*

Enter Robbers, R., with lighted torches—they burst open the cottage, and set it on fire.

Enter NICHOLA, L., conducting the Countess—he darts into the cottage amidst the flames, and the Countess is seized by the Robbers.

Enter COUNT LUDIVICO, hastily, L., followed by BARON RODOLPH, in pursuit, and while attempting to elude him, he falls into the hands of the Robbers—Nichola, escapes triumphantly from the blazing ruins with the Children, and places them before the Baron.

Bar. [Kneeling.] Mercy! mercy!

[*The Robbers secure the Baron, and bear him off, R.—the First and Second Robbers seize the Children, and are dragging them off—Nichola runs behind one of the Robbers, snatches two pistols from his belt, fires, and kills them both.*

SCENE V.—*A Front Wood.*

Enter SECOND LIEUTENANT and Robber, c., with BRIDGET.

SONG.—BRIDGET.

Pity an old woman, pray,
Who don't know which is her way;
Oh, dear! I am quite in a fidget!

Both your faces declare
 You are friends to the fair;
 So, sweet looking, kind looking gentlemen,
 Pray, pity poor bandy-legg'd Bridget !
 Hop and go forward, poor bandy-legg'd Bridget !

I'm hobbling, lame, and poor,
 Nought of me can you procure,
 So spare an old woman a fidget ;
 Nor be thought, my fine elves,
 Old women yourselves,
 But, sweet looking, kind looking gentlemen,
 Who pity poor bandy-legg'd Bridget !
 Hop and go forward, poor bandy-legg'd Bridget !

[*Exeunt*, L.]

SCENE VI.—*The Interior of the Robbers' Cave—an iron grating, L.—another cell, with an iron grating, R. U. E.—a large wheel at the back, R. C.—a rude couch, C.—a lamp suspended from the top.*

Two Robbers discovered walking on guard before the grating—a bugle is heard without—the Robbers turn the wheel round, which raises a stone, and discovers a grating, which they unlock.

Enter the GREAT DEVIL, the COUNTESS, the COUNT, ROBBERS, NICHOLA, and BRIDGET, who is pushed about by the Robbers—she at length conceals herself behind a projection of the cave—Nichola takes a bottle from his pocket, and pours the contents into a small keg of liquor.

Cou. [Kneeling to the Great Devil.] Whatever may be my lot, in mercy, spare my husband !

Dev. Be mine and he is free !

Cou. [Rising with indignation.] Never !

Dev. Then let him meet his fate !

[*The Robbers seize the Count—Nichola, unseen, draws the bullets from the Great Devil's pistols, and gives them to him—he then crosses and whispers to the Count—the Great Devil fires at the Count—he falls, and Nichola carries him into the cell, R. U. E. The Countess screams, and is fainting—Nichola runs to her, whispers, and shows her the bullets—he is observed by the Robbers—the Great Devil searches him, and finds the bullets.*

Dev. [Producing them.] What shall be the punishment of the traitor?

Robbers. [Shouting.] Death! death!

[Nichola is seized and put into the cell, R. U. E., where he has placed the Count—the Countess is confined in the cell, L. U. E.—the Second Lieutenant gives each Robber a cup, and the Great Devil fills them with liquor from the keg—*exeunt Robbers*, R. and L.

[The Great Devil locks the grating of the cell, places the keys in his cap, and ties it on, drinks, and falls asleep on the couch—Bridget peeps from behind the rock, as the scene closes.

SCENE VII.—*A Wood.*

Enter BARON RODOLPH, led by two COTTAGERS, L.

Cot. Pray, my lord, do favour my poor cot with your presence till I can send to the castle for assistance.—Julian, go you to the commandant, and tell him that the Baron Rodolph has discovered the Great Devil's retreat, and that he must instantly send a sufficient body of soldiers to secure them. Hasten, Julian! you will be well rewarded.

[*Exit Julian*, R.

Rod. Lead on to your cottage.

[*Exeunt*, R.

SCENE VIII.—*The Robbers' Cave, as before.*

The GREAT DEVIL discovered asleep, and BRIDGET trying to open the cell in which Nichola is confined—she at last succeeds, and he comes out with his hands tied behind him—Bridget unties them—he cautiously draws the pistols from the Great Devil's belt, and gives them to Bridget, who stands over him ready to fire if he should awake—Nichola, with his dagger, takes the screws out of the locks, lifts the door off the hinges, and liberates the Countess, who expresses great alarm—Nichola goes to the wheel, but cannot turn it—he then tries to open the door of the cell where the Count is confined—Bridget gives Nichola a pair of scissors—he cuts open the top of the Great Devil's cap, takes out the keys, unlocks the cell, and liberates the Count.

[The Count and Countess embrace—Nichola motions the Count to help him with the wheel—they turn it, and raise the stone—Nichola unlocks the grating, and Bridget escapes.

[Nichola puts out the lamp—the Count lets go the wheel, and the stone rapidly falls—the Great Devil awakes—he finds that his cap has been cut, and the keys stolen—he hastily turns the wheel—the Robbers rush forth and point to Nichola, who is standing in the front, c.

Dev. Comrades, here is treachery again. What punishment do you now award?

Rob. Death, captain! instant death!

Dev. Then bind the three together, and throw them headlong into the sea!

[The Robbers turn the wheel and raise the stone, and as they are going out, the BARON rushes in, followed by Soldiers.

A GENERAL COMBAT.

[The Great Devil and the Baron engage—the Count and the Lieutenant—Nichola and a Robber—the Great Devil and the Baron draw pistols from their belts, fire at the same moment, and they both fall wounded—the Count conquers the Lieutenant, who falls and dies—the Soldiers stand over the Robbers, who are subdued.—BRIDGET hobbles in with the two Children—Nichola pulls off his disguise, and, in his first dress, discovers himself to the Great Devil and the Baron—they both rise with difficulty, draw their daggers, aim a blow at Nichola, stagger against each other, and fall down and die, as the curtain descends.—PICTURE.

THE END.

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